(iv) Tariff value (base price) of palm oils was frozen in July, 2006 and crude soyabean oil was frozen since September, 2006.

(v) Crude and refined edible grade vegetable oils have been exempted from 4% SAD *w.e.f.* 1.3.2007.

(vi) Export of edible oils has been banned *w.e.f.* 17.3.2008 except coconut oil (through Cochin Port) and certain oils produced from minor forest origin.

(vii) In order to encourage production of solvent extracted oils in the country and to promote export of extractions, excise duty on food grade hexane has been reduced to 14%.

(viii) Compulsory use of indigenous oils in the manufacture of vanaspati has been removed *w.e.f.* 11.2.2008.

(ix) State Governments have been allowed to impose stock limits on edible oils and oilseeds *w.e.f.* 7.4.2008.

(x) In order to provide relief to the poorer sections of the society from the rising prices of edible oils, the Central Government has introduced a scheme for distribution of upto 10 lakh tons of imported edible oils in 2008-09 at a subsidy of Rs.15/- per kg. through State Governments at the rate of 1 kg. per ration card per month.

Rise in prices of essential commodities

†821. SHRI AJYA SINGH CHAUTALA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that there has been unprecedented rise in the prices of consumer goods being consumed by the common public;

(b) whether Government would set up a board to check price -rise and fix the prices of consumer goods; and

(c) if so, by when?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) Government is aware of the increase in prices of some essential commodities and has responded by taking several steps to stabilise prices and to soften the impact of price rise on consumers.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Rise in the prices of food items

†822. SHRI KRISHAN LAL BALMIKI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been an unprecedented rise in the prices of food items in the country during the last two years;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.